

8 Simple Points for Making Good Hiring Choices

BY JAY GOLDSTEIN

Probably the single most difficult job in our industry is finding, hiring and retaining the right people for your team. There has been much written about how to be successful in this pursuit. I suggest that if you pay attention to these eight points you will come out ahead of the game:

1. Hire winners not whiners.

Winners know what it takes to be successful and they will figure out what needs to be done to win. Whiners constantly complain about why they can't be successful.

2. Hire people who have and exhibit personal pride.

Pride is evident and shows through in a number of positive ways. For example you can tell someone has pride in the way they dress, in their personal grooming, in the way they talk about their family and friends, or in the way they talk about their future.

3. Hire people who are achievement- and goal-oriented.

You have spent a good deal of time outlining your goals and objectives as a business, so it only makes sense that you want to work with people who will help you achieve those goals. Look for people who have good grades, have held leadership positions in clubs and organizations, participate in extracurricular activities, have won awards or have excelled in other ways.

4. Play to your employees' strengths.

Recognize and reinforce their positive behavior. Let them contribute at their highest levels.

5. Eliminate poor performers.

Poor performers will absolutely create a drag on performance and if not addressed can have a devastating effect on your culture. I refer to this as the "crab bucket" theory. If you have ever watched a bucket of live crabs you will

know that they are constantly trying to climb out of the bucket and escape to a better fate, but they never make it out because the other crabs keep dragging them back down into the bucket. This is a never-ending process. Don't let this be a part of your culture. Your great people will begin to question your commitment to excellence. I think the best quote I have heard on this subject comes from Michael Levy, owner of Desperados Mexican Restaurant in Garland, Texas. He said, "I'd rather run a shift short with great people than fully staffed with bad people." I couldn't agree more.

6. Always be on the lookout for talent.

Not just walking through your front door, but everywhere you go. You meet people all the time so have your talent antennae up at places like church, sporting events, schools, retail businesses, business meetings, clubs and at the gym.

7. Practice the Goldilocks approach to staffing.

Not too much, not too little, but just right. Too much staffing leads to myriad problems — higher costs, lower productivity, more mistakes — because everyone thinks something is being done by someone else and there is too much horsing around. Too few staff creates higher levels of frustration for staff and guests, and a drop in overall service and hospitality. Staff for guest satisfaction and staff to meet your concept's "defining" operating standards.

8. Never 'practice' on the guest.

Before a new hire is put on the schedule they must be ready and able to meet your operating standards. **RS&G**

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